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excellent style, and received a large share of applause, several being encored. The whole was under the direction of Mr. J. Rudkin, R.A.M., who sang several buffo songs with much effect. Mr. Rudkin may be congratulated in being so well supported by Miss Danielson, Messrs. Ashton, Clagett, and Erison. We must not omit to mention Mr. J. F. Meen, who ably accompanied on the pianoforte.

### Reviews.

NOVELLO, EWER AND CO.

*Souvenir d'Irlande.* Caprice Fantasia; for the Piano-forte. By Willem Coenen.

THIS Fantasia is a good specimen of the profusely ornamented pieces of the modern school of pianoforte writing; and, as such, may be recommended to all who are in search of novelties in this style. The melodies are well woven in with elegant arpeggio and scale passages, after the Thalberg pattern; and there is an air of refinement pervading the whole composition which will render it always welcome both to executants and audience.

*Barcarole, pour Piano.* Par Ant. Rubinstein.

Herr Rubinstein's Barcarole is strikingly original, both in melody and treatment; and the piece will amply repay the trouble of practice. The first subject, commencing in F minor, has a charming modulation into the relative major; and the theme, after the double bar, in B flat major, has a lazy flow, quite in the Barcarole style; and is, moreover, extremely melodious. The subject, in 3/4 rhythm (in the original key), with which the piece concludes, is effectively ornamented with double *acciaccaturas*, which will require to be very neatly played, in order to realise the composer's intention.

*Minuet and Trio, for the Pianoforte.* Composed by T. Ridley Prentice.

WE are always glad to see a young composer working upwards; and are therefore disposed to view Mr. Prentice's modest Minuet and Trio in a more favourable light than we might have done had it formed a portion of that "Grand Sonata" with which so many inexperienced writers almost commence their career. In a large work of this kind so many good ideas are effectually buried that the composer very often receives much less than his due meed of praise; and thus a really meritorious aspirant for fame may encounter a check at the very time when he stands in the greatest need of sympathy and encouragement. That Mr. Prentice has had Beethoven in his mind when he composed this Minuet and Trio does not in the least degree detract from the merit of his music. Both movements are well written. The Minuet, in B flat major, is melodious; and the passages of imitation show that the composer has studied in a good school. The Trio, in the tonic minor, is well contrasted with the Minuet; the accompaniment, moving in triplets, and the division of the subject between the treble and bass part of the instrument, having a very excellent effect. We hope again to meet with Mr. Prentice in a composition of somewhat greater pretension.

1. *The Rainy Day.* Song. Poetry by Longfellow.

2. *How fades the Light.* Song.

3. *Forget me not.* Song. Words by William Duthie.

Composed by Joseph Barnby.

MR. BARNBY has expressed Longfellow's words with a fidelity thoroughly opposed to the theory of many song-writers of the day, whose melody would as aptly fit one piece of poetry as another; and whose harmony has done duty so long that it is justly entitled to superannuation. We particularly like the unharmonised *appoggiatura* (A sharp) in the first phrase; and a happy effect is obtained, on the repetition of the opening subject, by changing the B natural into B sharp, and thus unexpectedly modulating into C sharp minor. The accompaniment, asserting itself where the voice is at rest, is always elegant; and the harmonies, never conventional, are in no place unduly

forced. "How fades the light" is more restless in the harmonies; and in parts appears to us somewhat overlaid. The first phrase, beginning upon the dominant harmony of F sharp minor (the song being in E major), is quaint and uncommon; but the effect is good; and many of the passages are so melodious that we should claim for the song a high place amongst Mr. Barnby's compositions, were the ear allowed somewhat more repose. We may say, however, that the song commences with a prelude in E major, which counteracts the effect of indecision of key at the beginning of the voice part; and that the accompaniment is written with all the skill of a practised theorist. "Forget me not" is a quiet vocal melody, in F major, with a semiquaver accompaniment throughout. The modulations into B flat major and G minor, spring most legitimately from the melody; and the voice and pianoforte, therefore, flow in loving company to the end. We should be glad to hear these songs in the Concert-room; for although not equal in merit, they are all protests against that school of composition which has no higher object than that of writing down to the comprehension of the uneducated.

*Glory be to God on high.* Composed by Samuel Sebastian Wesley.

WE think we may say, without fear of contradiction, that lovers of English church music are indebted to the organist of Gloucester Cathedral more than to any man living, for widening the bounds and stimulating the development of the music of the sanctuaries. It is impossible to forget, as it would be unfair to underrate, the effect produced by the publication of his great service in E, with its memorable preface. If we may say so without irreverence, the unexpected cry at midnight, "Behold, the Bridegroom comes!" could hardly have come upon the foolish virgins with a more startling effect than did the dictum of the English Cathedral organist, who, daring to think for himself, said of the services of Tallis, Rogers, Aldrich, &c., "such works as those are as unworthy of the words to which they are set, as they are ill calculated to excite interest in any congregation acquainted with music at the present day." If we could only imagine the state of sleepy stupor into which English Church musicians had fallen when this statement was made it will materially diminish the difficulty of estimating the effect of this bold move.

Fortunately Dr. Wesley's genius was equal to his boldness, and the one supporting the other, rendered his position almost unassailable. Had he been a mere theorist he might have been sneered out of existence, but happily he was (and still is) the greatest church organist and composer of his day, and therefore beyond the reach of his antagonists. The seed he then sowed is now bearing its fruit, and every year only adds to the ranks of those whose motto is, "The old masters, as a point of departure, not an eternal resting place!"

It can therefore hardly be a matter of surprise that we are disposed to look upon everything emanating from the pen of this composer with an unusual amount of interest; and upon its own merits alone the "Gloria in Excelsis," now under review, is well worthy of attention. Being apparently intended for choirs of an ordinary calibre there is scarcely the amount of characteristic difficulty we are in the habit of meeting with in Dr. Wesley's works; still the master's hand is visible throughout, and we should hardly think it possible that any musician could fail to recognise it, albeit comparatively plain and simple, as the work of a great musician.

*The Organist's Quarterly Journal of Original Compositions.* Edited by Dr. Spark.

FOLLOWING closely upon our remarks on "Organs, Organists, and Organ-music" (which were held over two or three months for want of space), came the announcement of this important work. It was not a little pleasant to us to find, by this announcement, that the comparative dearth of compositions for the organ by English writers